

Message Text

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INFO ALEDP

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E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:PINT UR, PFOR

SUBJECT:NEW BOOK BY SOLZHENITSYN

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1. ON DECEMBER 28 THE YMCA-PRESS IN PARIS PUBLISHED, IN

RUSSIAN, A BOOK BY SOVIET WRITER ALEKSANDR SOLZHENITSYN ENTITLED "THE GULAG ARCHIPELAGO, 1918-1956." SOLZHENITSYN DESCRIBES THE BOOK AS A "RESEARCH WORK ABOUT SOVIET PRISON CAMPS THAT CONTAINS ONLY TRUE FACTS, PLACES, AND THE NAMES OF MORE THAN 200 PERSONS STILL ALIVE." HARPER & ROW IS SCHEDULED TO PUBLISH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION IN THE US IN APRIL, AND TRANSLATIONS ARE BEING PREPARED IN SWEDEN, ENGLAND, FRANCE, WEST GERMANY AND SWITZERLAND AS WELL. EXCERPTS AND COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK HAVE APPEARED IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AND OTHER WESTERN PAPERS, AND SUMMARIES AND WESTERN REACTION ARE BEING CARRIED ON THE RECENTLY UNJAMMED RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE BROADCASTS OF VOA, BBC AND DEUTSCHE WELLE. RADIO LIBERTY, STILL HEAVILY JAMMED, HAS OBTAINED RIGHTS TO BROADCAST THE COMPLETE TEXT OF THE BOOK.

2. "GULAG ARCHIPELAGO" IS BASED ON SOLZHENITSYN'S OWN EXPERIENCE AS A POLITICAL PRISONER IN THE CAMPS FROM 1945 TO 1956, AS WELL AS ON INTERVIEWS IN THE EARLY 1960'S WITH OVER 200 OTHER SURVIVORS OF THE CAMPS. IT IS UNRESERVEDLY FRANK ABOUT CAMP ATROCITIES AND UNSPARINGLY CRITICAL NOT ONLY OF STALIN BUT OF LENIN AND BY IMPLICATION THE POST-STALIN RULERS AS WELL. THE OFFICIAL SOVIET NEWS AGENCY TASS PREDICTABLY CALLED THE BOOK SLANDEROUS IN A JANUARY 2 STATEMENT. AND THE TRANSMITTAL OF THE WORK ABROAD FOR FOREIGN PUBLICATION VIOLATES NEW SOVIET REGULATIONS PUT INTO FORCE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ADHERENCE OF THE USSR LAST MAY TO THE UNIVERSAL COPYRIGHT CONVENTION. SPECIFICALLY, AN ALL-UNION COPYRIGHT AGENCY WAS CREATED IN SEPTEMBER AND ENDOWED BY THE USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WITH SOLE AUTHORITY TO ARRANGE FOR THE PUBLICATION OF SOVIET WORKS ABROAD. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NEW AGENCY HAS STATED THAT THE PUBLICATION OF A NEW SOVIET WORK ABROAD "IS AN ACT OF FOREIGN TRADE THAT IN OUR COUNTRY A PRIVATE PERSON MAY NOT PERFORM ON HIS OWN." BY PERSONALLY AUTHORIZING THE PUBLICATION OF "THE GULAG ARCHIPELAGO" IN THE WEST (THROUGH HIS REPRESENTATIVE IN ZURICH, LAWYER FRITZ HEEB), SOLZHENITSYN HAS OPENLY DEFIED THESE REGULATIONS.

3. PUBLICATION OF "THE GULAG ARCHIPELAGO" RAISES A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SERIOUS DILEMMA FOR THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT. ON THE ONE HAND, THE KREMLIN WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY LIKE TO IMPRISON SOLZHENITSYN AND THUS SILENCE A PERSISTENT CRITIC. LEGISLATION ON "ANTI-SOVIET AGITATION AND PROPAGANDA" IS AVAILABLE FOR THIS PURPOSE AND HAS FREQUENTLY BEEN USED AGAINST LESS FAMOUS DISSENTERS IN THE PAST. THE NEW COPYRIGHT REGULATIONS, WHILE STILL VAGUE, ARE ALSO AVAILABLE. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOLZHENITSYN'S HIGH

INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION MIGHT RENDER ANY REPRISALS AGAINST HIM COUNTERPRODUCTIVE IN VIEW OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT'S ARDENT DESIRE FOR ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION WITH THE WEST AND FOR AN EARLY SUMMIT-LEVEL CONCLUSION TO CSCE. THE PROTESTS OF THE US NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND OTHER GROUPS LAST AUTUMN OVER THREATS TO DISSIDENT PHYSICIST ANDREY SAKHAROV WERE TAKEN SERIOUSLY IN THE KREMLIN. AS A WRITER AND NOT A SCIENTIST, HOWEVER, THE KREMLIN MAY BELIEVE SOLZHENITSYN'S POTENTIAL WESTERN SUPPORT TO BE LESS IMPOSING THAN SAKHAROV'S.

4. NEVERTHELESS, FOREIGN POLICY CONSIDERATIONS MAY RESTRAIN THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT IN THE NEAR FUTURE FROM TAKING ANY MAJOR ACTION AGAINST SOLZHENITSYN, SUCH AS ARREST FOR "ANTI-SOVIETISM." HOWEVER, THE PUBLICATION IN THE WEST OF "THE GULAG ARCHIPELAGO" IS PROBABLY TOO GREAT AN AFFRONT TO LET PASS TOTALLY UNPUNISHED. THE SOVIET MEDIA WILL CERTAINLY ATTACK BOTH THE BOOK AND ITS AUTHOR. MORE THAN THAT, IT IS NOT UNLIKELY THAT SOLZHENITSYN WILL BE HARASSED FOR VIOLATION OF THE NEW COPYRIGHT REGULATIONS. PRECISELY WHAT SUCH HARASSMENT WOULD ENTAIL IS AS YET UNKNOWN.

5. SOLZHENITSYN HIMSELF CHOSE THE MOMENT OF PUBLICATION APPARENTLY ON THE BASIS OF TWO KEY EVENTS: THE KGB SEIZURE OF A MANUSCRIPT LAST AUGUST AND THE JANUARY 1 DATE OF OPERATION OF THE NEW ALL-UNION COPYRIGHT AGENCY. PUBLICATION OF AN AUTHORIZED MANUSCRIPT IN PARIS APPARENTLY FORESTALLS A KGB EFFORT TO PEDDLE A DOCTORED MANUSCRIPT A LA VICTOR LOUIS. AND THE DECEMBER 28 PUBLICATION DATE WAS APPARENTLY CHOSEN IN AN EFFORT TO FINESSE THE COPYRIGHT AGENCY'S MANDATE.

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6. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE REPORTAGE ON SOVIET COMMENTARY ON THE SOLZHENITSYN ISSUE AND ITS POSSIBLE EFFECT ON BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL RELATIONS. KISSINGER

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